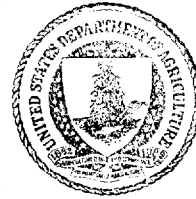




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BIOLOGICAL SURVEY OFFICIALS INSPECT GAME PRESERVES

Paul G. Redington, chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture, and W. L. McAtee, in charge of the bureau's division of food habits research, recently spent ten days in southern Georgia and northern Florida, where they viewed with H. L. Stoddard, stationed at Thomasville, Ga., the results of his work in the study of quail conditions on southern game preserves.

For five years a group of prominent men have contributed more than \$40,000 for a thorough study by the Biological Survey of the quail, its habits, migrations, diseases, propagation, and enemies. Opportunity was afforded Mr. Redington and Mr. McAtee to travel extensively over the territory to see the application by owners of the game preserves of ideas developed by Mr. Stoddard, who is in charge of the work. Commenting on his observations, Mr. Redington said:

"Naturally, the primary object of the cooperators in financing this study was to increase the supply of quail so that better hunting might be obtained. This, however, has not been the only accomplishment. Over a wide area where the use of fire is necessary in getting rid of rank vegetation, which is not suitable for quail, the method used in permitting fire to run only under close control should be of great value throughout the entire pine region. An age-old custom of "woods burning" has been practiced by landowners of the general pine region

similar to that found around Thomasville. Largely no control of such fires has obtained, and a great deal of damage has been done to the woods, to the soil, and to the wild life. The practice of these owners in the controlled use of fire will, it is believed, constitute a precedent for work elsewhere in the South where fire has to be used for beneficial development.

"Another important consideration resulting from the study is the fact that, through the use of methods developed by Mr. Stoddard for establishing proper habitat for quail, an additional definite value to the land has been established by reason of the presence of the birds there. In other words, if a farmer should adopt and successfully use on his lands the methods outlined by Mr. Stoddard, he might, through the leasing of hunting rights secure an additional income up to 15 cents an acre.

"Still another feature has to do with the betterment of conditions. The individuals who have established the game preserves either own or lease the lands for the purpose, and in either event by such control they are establishing higher standards of living for both the white and the colored people of the region, assuring definite employment for the people of the neighborhood on projects connected with the development of game preserves, and in many cases furnishing up-to-date houses, with adequate sanitation facilities to the employees or tenants of the preserves."

After the Thomasville trip, Mr. Redington and Mr. McAtee went to Brunswick, on the southeastern coast of Georgia and were the guests for four days of Howard E. Coffin, who has a fine estate on Sapelo Island and owns much of the territory on the islands and marshes in close proximity to Sapelo. "A great opportunity was given here," said Mr. Redington, "to see what not only Mr. Coffin but other owners of game preserves on adjacent islands are doing in the propagation and protection of the fauna and the preservation

of the flora. Quail, pheasants, turkeys, waterfowl, and deer are either being propagated or amply protected, and many of the islands are, so far as possible, being maintained in unmodified primitive condition. Here, as in the Thomasville region, not only are the owners of the properties benefiting through the work that they are doing to assure themselves of continued sport and a most pleasant environment, but they are contributing to the uplift of social conditions throughout the territory and constitute a powerful agency for better law enforcement in the region.

The estates owned by individuals off the coast of southeastern Georgia are rich in history, many of them dating back as developed plantations to the early colonial period. As one travels throughout the region the ruins of the old plantation homes and slave quarters are constantly encountered.

"On Blackbeard Island, Georgia, one of the bird refuges of the Biological Survey, which we inspected over its whole length, some of the chachalacas introduced a few years ago from Mexico were seen, as well as numerous deer. The island is evidently a good sanctuary for all sorts of small birds. On outlying marshes clapper rails and other species were noted.

"On this trip it was possible to see rookeries of American égrets, blue herons, ibises, also many species of waterfowl, bald eagles, and a large number of song and insectivorous birds."

A stop was made at Savannah, Ga., where, with U. S. Game Protector E. B. Whitehead, Mr. Redington had an opportunity to view the Savannah River Bird Refuge, which is maintained by the Biological Survey along the Savannah River northwest of the city.

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